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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/700,185	12/18/2000	Takayuki Araki	P06971US00/L	2588
881	7590	01/31/2005	EXAMINER	
STITES & HARBISON PLLC 1199 NORTH FAIRFAX STREET SUITE 900 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			RUTHKOSKY, MARK	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1745	

DATE MAILED: 01/31/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/700,185

Applicant(s)

ARAKI ET AL.

Examiner

Mark Ruthkosky

Art Unit

1745

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 November 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 5-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1,5-29,37 and 41-44 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 30-36 and 38-40 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election without traverse of 30-36 and 38-40 in the reply filed on 11/17/2004 is acknowledged.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 32-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The instant claims are to a material that comprises a multi-segmented block copolymer containing at least two types of fluoropolymer chain segments (A and B, for example) differing in monomer composition, with at least one type of the fluoropolymer chain segments containing sulfonic acid functional groups (chain segment A as defined in claim 32.) The dependent claims 32-34 state that chain segment A includes (a) an ethylenic fluoropolymer unit containing sulfonic acid functional groups; and (b) at least one type of ethylenic fluoromonomer unit copolymerizable with the unit (a) and containing no sulfonic acid functional groups. The unit (b) in claim 32 is defined to be the same as the segment B of claim 30. From this, the claims are indefinite as it is not clear in the polymer where one block begins and ends. For example, a block of subunits (B-B-B-B-B-B-b-b-b-b-b-b-b) is indefinite as B=b and it is not clear which elements belong to which segment or unit.

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Claim 33 is further indefinite as it allows the oxygen of the polymer to have a value of zero. In this instance, the formula is indefinite as it is not clear how the atoms are bound to one another.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

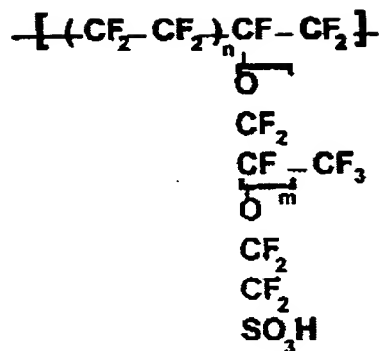
(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 30-36 and 38-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Cisar (US 6,492,431.)

The instant claims are to a material for a solid polyelectrolyte, comprising a multi-segmented fluoropolymer that comprises a block copolymer containing at least two types of fluoropolymer chain segments differing in monomer composition, at least one type of the fluoropolymer chain segments containing sulfonic acid functional groups.

Cisar (US 6,492,431) teaches a material for a solid polyelectrolyte, comprising a multi-segmented fluoropolymer that comprises a block copolymer containing at least two types of fluoropolymer chain segments differing in monomer composition, at least one type of the fluoropolymer chain segments containing sulfonic acid functional groups.

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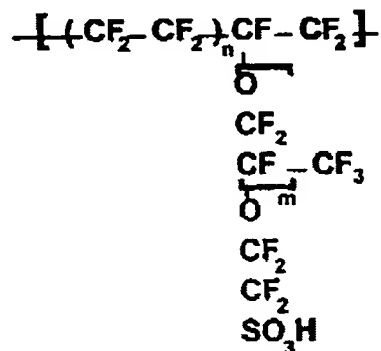
One segment block contains polytetrafluoroethylene groups (PTFE) and another segment block contains perfluorovinyl ester with sulfonic acid functional groups. The crystalline melting point is over 300 C. The perfluorovinyl ester with sulfonic acid functional groups segment includes (a) an ethylenic fluoropolymer unit containing sulfonic acid functional groups; and (b) at least one type of ethylenic fluoromonomer unit copolymerizable with the unit (a) and containing no sulfonic acid functional groups. It is further noted that the polymer may include a sulfonyl fluoride group (figure 3 and accompanying text.) The material is commonly known as Nafion, which has an equivalent weight of 400-1600, (see example 2 for a weight of 950.) As the materials of the reference and the instant invention are equivalent, the modulus of elasticity of the materials will be the same. Thus, the claims are anticipated.

Claims 30-36 and 38-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Cisar (US 5,635,039.)

Cisar (US 5,635,039) teaches a material for a solid polyelectrolyte, comprising a multi-segmented fluoropolymer that comprises a block copolymer containing at least two types of fluoropolymer chain segments differing in monomer composition, at least one type of the

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fluoropolymer chain segments containing sulfonic acid functional groups. The material is defined to be Nafion, which has the following structure:



One segment block contains polytetrafluoroethylene groups (PTFE) and another segment block contains perfluorovinyl ester with sulfonic acid functional groups. The crystalline melting point is over 300 C. The perfluorovinyl ester with sulfonic acid functional groups segment includes (a) an ethylenic fluoropolymer unit containing sulfonic acid functional groups; and (b) at least one type of ethylenic fluoromonomer unit copolymerizable with the unit (a) and containing no sulfonic acid functional groups. It is further noted that the polymer may include a sulfonyl fluoride group (col. 13, lines 7-17.) The material is commonly known as Nafion, which has an equivalent weight of 400-1600, (see col. 7, lines 45-end for a weight of 1100.) As the materials of the reference and the instant invention are equivalent, the modulus of elasticity of the materials will be the same. Thus, the claims are anticipated.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The cited references include general teachings and relevant features as to the state of

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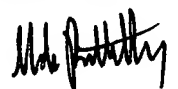
the art at the time of the invention. These references are noted as art that may be applied to amended claims. The reference to Klaus Schmidt-Rohr is noted as a teaching reference with regard to the structure and physical properties of Nafion.

Examiner Correspondence

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark Ruthkosky whose telephone number is 571-272-1291. The examiner can normally be reached on FLEX schedule (generally, Monday-Thursday from 9:00-6:30.) If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Ryan can be reached at 571-272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free.)

Mark Ruthkosky
Primary Patent Examiner
Art Unit 1745


1/25/05